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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANJUL 000154

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ADDIS ABABA FOR USAU, DAKAR PLS PASS ODC, DAO, AND RAO

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MASS](#) [AU](#) [UN](#) [GA](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: THE GAMBIA: MORE TROOPS FOR DARFUR?

REF: BANJUL 120

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.4 (B AND D)

GOTG'S PROFESSED WILLINGNESS TO EXPAND ITS DARFUR CONTINGENT

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12. (C) Embassy received dip note, dated March 19, from Foreign Ministry stating that the GOTG "will consider increasing its troop contribution to Darfur, Sudan, provided that partners, such as the United States and the African Union, provide the necessary financial and logistical resources including ten (10) APCs." Following receipt of the dip note, Ambassador contacted Foreign Affairs Permanent Secretary Bai Ousman Seka and asked whether the GOTG had also

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conveyed a similar message to the African Union and United Nations; Seka responded that the GOTG would do so. Ambassador, noting GOTG's previous indication that it could expand its Darfur contingent from company to battalion (reftel), asked whether the GOTG remained willing to consider supplying a battalion, since there was no mention of it in the dip note. In response, Seka indicated that the GOTG was not as yet able to specify the precise number of additional troops that it could provide for Darfur, as it needed to give the matter further study.

13. (C) Ambassador told Seka that he would inform Washington of the GOTG's message, while reiterating that he could make no commitments regarding possible direct U.S. assistance to the Gambian contingent. Ambassador also repeated past urgings to the GOTG to advise the AU and UN directly of the assistance that would be needed in order to expand the Gambian force in Darfur. Seka nodded in understanding, while adding that the GOTG was compelled to stipulate provision of the APCs as a condition for expanding its contingent as a result of ever-growing concern for troops' protection due to the increased violence in Darfur in past months. However, he stated, the GOTG would maintain its current company-level force in Darfur regardless of whether the APCs were provided.

COMMENT

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13. (C) Judging from the dip note and Permanent Secretary Seka's remarks, the GOTG is not as yet willing to make a firm commitment to expand its Darfur contingent to a battalion. Moreover, the GOTG is now conditioning any increase in its Darfur contingent on donors' supplying ten APCs. At the same time, the GOTG's willingness, according to Seka, to maintain

its company-level force in Darfur with or without the APCs suggests that the GOTG itself recognizes that prospects of obtaining assistance on such a scale are remote. END  
COMMENT.  
STAFFORD